Miss. Bagley

# CANADA.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF GENERAL LITERATURE AND EDUCATION, APPOINTED BY THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

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SOLD AT THE DEPOSITORY,
GREAT QUEEN STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS,
AND 4, ROYAL EXCHANGE.
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Not many years ago, the voyage between Great Britain and America used to occupy a very long time: this was before steam-vessels were so generally used as they are at present. Passengers were, therefore, obliged to go over in sailing-vessels, which are very tedicus, because, when the wind is contrary, they cannot advance rapidly; whereas,

even when the wind is not favourable, steam-vessels, by the help of their large paddles, are only slightly impeded by it.

Now that this voyage can be performed in a few *days*, many more people go over to visit America than formerly; and, as we hear so much about the New World, the many curious things it contains, and the wonderful lakes and rivers which flow through it, we must endeavour to learn all we can about those states which belong to England, one of which is called Canada.

If you look at a map of North America, you will observe that

Canada is situated to the north of the United States, and of the great lakes Huron, Superior, Erie, Michigan, &c. It is bounded, on the north, by Hudson's Bay and Labrador, or New Britain; on the east, by the Atlantic Ocean; and, on the west, by the possessions of Russia in North America.

Canada is divided into two parts, called provinces, which are distinguished as Upper and Lower Canada. New York is the capital or chief city of Upper Canada, and Quebec of Lower Canada. This last is a very fine city, situated on the north bank of the great river

St. Lawrence; it stands on the top and sides of a magnificent rock, the highest point of which is called Cape Diamond. On this cape there is a very large fortress, which is very strongly fortified.

The largest river in Canada is the St. Lawrence, which rises in the lake Ontario, and falls into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Opposite to the town of Quebec, this river is nearly a mile and a half wide; and, during the long and severe winters, it is completely frozen over; and, as soon as the ice is considered quite secure, a road is broken, as smooth and as straight as the in-

equality of the heaps of ice will permit. As the water does not freeze all at once, one flake of ice gets piled upon another flake, till, jostled together by the tide, the pieces join into a great mass, and make the surface of the ice so unequal that they may be compared to hills and ridges of ice. Some of these the people chop through, in forming the road; and, where the ice is too hard to be moved, the road is made to wind. Heavy waggons, and all kinds of carriages, cross over on this frozen road; indeed, it is a great convenience to the Canadians, who have no bridge

over the river, but make use of very large ferry-boats, which are rowed over, not by men with oars, nor yet by steam, but by horses, working as they do in a threshing machine: by going round and round in the centre of the boat, they give motion to the paddles at each side, and so propel the vessel forward. These ferry-boats take over a large number of men and women, horses, cows, pigs, hay, and corn, at once; and, though not quite so convenient as London Bridge, yet they answer their purpose very well.

I mentioned before that the winters in Canada are very severe;

from the beginning of December to March the whole country is often completely covered with snow, which seldom leaves till May. As to the cold, it is far more intense than in England; the thermometer being frequently from fifty to sixty degrees below the freezing point; but it has been observed that, even by Europeans, the cold is not so much felt, on account of the dryness of the atmosphere.

Sometimes dreadful snow-storms occur, which are truly terrific, and of particular danger to any persons who happen to be travelling. They come on very suddenly, and the

snow from the heavens, and that drifted from the hills, comes down in a fine powder, and totally hides roads, fields, and every thing else that stands in its way. The poor traveller is then frequently lost, and his body never found till the snow melts in the spring.

The most remarkable animal that is found in Canada is the beaver, which is said to be the connecting animal between quadrupeds and fishes. If you had seen its works and fortifications, you would have been surprised at the astonishing degree of art and sagacity which it displays, particularly in the con-

struction of its habitation. The beaver is a social animal, and hundreds of them live together, just as we do, in towns and cities; they assemble together, in the spring, to the amount of about two hundred in a company, in order to provide their future residence. They generally choose a small branch of a running stream; over which they raise a kind of pier, formed of trees, which they contrive to gnaw through in such a manner that they shall fall directly across the stream. Behind this dam they construct their habitations, which are generally about twelve feet long and eight or ten

in breadth, and large enough to house eight or ten beavers; but sometimes a hundred beavers have been found together in one large house, divided into a great number of compartments.

The shape of the beaver-castle is generally oval, and so well roofed as to be water-proof. Its interior is as nicely constructed, and with the same degree of art; having a communication both with the water and the land, and making provisions against rapid changes of weather, and against floods. The beaver, when at work, makes very great use of its tail, which is broad and

flat, and covered with scales: with it he lays on the clay he uses in building; pressing it into the crevices, and smoothing the outward covering.

During the summer, beavers feed on leaves, fruit, and sometimes crabs or cray-fish; and each family, during that season, lays in its magazine of winter provisions: like the industrious ant, they "provide their meat in the summer, and gather their food in the harvest."

THE END.

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